

**Borough of Stonington**  
**Board of Warden and Burgesses Monthly Meeting**  
**June 20, 2023**  
**MINUTES**

Warden Michael Schefers called the monthly meeting of the Borough of Stonington Board of Warden and Burgesses to order at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at Borough Hall. Present, in addition to Warden Schefers were Burgesses Amy Nicholas, Kevin Rogers, Amanda Barnes, and Kevin Bowdler; and Clerk-Treasurer Lisa Coleman. Approximately 20 members of the public were present.

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, the minutes of the monthly meeting of May 15, 2023, were unanimously approved.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

RECEIVED:

- a) SVIA-Propose bench replacing
- b) Stonington Historical Society-Fourth of July Parade
- c) Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race
- d) PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP auditor approval
- e) William Cosgrove, Curb Cut application

**REPORT OF CLERK-TREASURER**

Town of Stonington paid for the election workers.

**REVIEW OF BILLS/YTD FINANCIAL REPORT; ARPA UPDATE**

Bills for the period May 16, 2023 through June 16, 2023 totaled \$120,956.47. Large bill of note is the paving of Water Street from the viaduct to High Street. I&E through June 16, 2023 shows total revenue to date of \$1,389,518.12, which is \$37,032.12 over budget; and net income to date of \$186,210.19. Balance of ARPA funds is \$89,235.

**WARDEN'S REPORT**

1. Met with First Selectman, Town Engineer, New Public Works Director and DOT Officials and briefed Courtney's office with Danielle. I will keep everyone up to date. I suggest until the proposal is submitted to us, we wait to contact state reps, start petitions, etc.
2. Attended monthly Town Department Head meeting
3. Attended Monthly COG meeting
4. Attended Town Veterans Memorial dedication
5. Addressed a number of resident concerns
6. Prepared review for budget variances

**BOROUGH CLOCK** - None

## **COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS**

### **Streets & Sidewalks (Schefers)**

1. Conducted monthly brush pickup
2. Continued Work on painting/repainting Road Stop Signs and Cross Walks
3. Continued road-sweeping and lawn maintenance
4. Summer temporary help will start June 20<sup>th</sup>, Hoping to have a second temporary helper.
5. Request from SVIA for a Sandy Bragdon memorial bench at Hungry Palette

### **Fire & Emergency Management (Nicholas/Hoadley)**

In May, Sbfd responded to 9 calls of which 4 were in the Borough. They were as follows:

- 1) 5-3-23 10:21pm Fire Alarm Activation 13 East Grand St. (false activation)
- 2) 5-4-23 7:41pm Fire Alarm Activation 30 Island Rd. (burnt steak)
- 3) 5-5-23 9:10pm Fire Alarm Activation 13 East Grand St. (false activation)
- 4) 5-5-23 11:40pm Fire Alarm Activation 13 East Grand St. (false activation)
- 5) 5-16-23 8:28pm Medical assist with SAC 28 Watch Hill Ave. (lift assist)
- 6) 5-17-23 12:26pm Odor of propane 9 Shawondassee Dr. (nothing found)
- 7) 5-24-23 7:56pm Fire Alarm Activation 119 Alpha Ave. (burnt popcorn)
- 8) 5-25-23 1:01am Mutual Aid Stand-by to Pawcatuck FD (structure fire)
- 9) 5-31-23 6:07pm Fire Alarm Activation 23 High St. (burnt chicken)

### **May Police Incident Report**

In May, the police responded to 37 calls in the borough including 7 Parking Complaints, 6 Medical Assists, 4 Fire Related calls, 3 Assist Citizen, 2 911 Hang up/Misdial, 2 Accidents and 2 Welfare Checks. There was one incident each of Animal Control, Suspicious Activity, Protective Order Violation, Disturbance, Minor Traffic Service, Alarm Burglar (False Alarm), Alarm Panic, Check Building, Assist Other Agency, Stolen Motor Vehicle, and Nuisance.

There was one arrest related to the disturbance.

### **Parks, Trees & Rights of Way (Barnes)**

The Borough received a check in the amount of \$7,500 from Leo Labbe for the vandalism/destruction of the Zelkova tree on Front Street. I'm looking into the health of a tree at 25 Main Street. All of its leaves are covered in what looks like a black soot. I'm looking into the possibility of the Borough becoming a "Tree City USA." Applications will be accepted starting in September.

### **Public Buildings (Rogers)**

Weeded the firehouse today. Cannons update: the cannon that is having its wheels replaced will stay on Cannon Square. The wheels will be here in the next 2-4 months. Fire escape at Borough Hall replacement is being looked at. Michael and I will be walking the Borough and creating a pictorial log of cracks in sidewalks and bushes that overhang sidewalks. Many residents do not know that sidewalks are their responsibility. Regarding the Comfort Station, fundraising is still going on.

### **Utilities & Sanitation (Bowdler)**

Meeting this Thursday with EV Charging company. One of the residents mentioned that there have not been skunks in the past two years, credited not putting out bags until Tuesday morning, and that Tom's News Stand has not been feeding the birds.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Resident Jesse Diggs mentioned his concern regarding the viaduct and not influencing the decision makers now. Warden Schefers will report back the next meeting with First Selectman, Town Engineer, New Public Works Director and DOT Officials at either the next meeting or through the newspaper reports.

Chief Hoadley asked how much the cannons weigh and if there is concern it could be stolen.

Janet Vaskas clarified that the sidewalk belongs to the Borough but the upkeep is the responsibility of the homeowner. Burgess Rogers asked if we could put together a list of sidewalk repairers for both the Borough and the residents to refer to. Janet Hanratty is sending names of both good and poor-quality repairers. Paul Janssens asked the question of how to solve the root problems pushing up sidewalks.

Charles Hartman talked about recanvassing the community to find our priorities, since there are many issues. Kevin Bowdler spoke to the Comfort Station \$66,000 privately, \$50,000 from the Borough, \$50,000 from the Town of Stonington. The amount to build the Comfort station is approximately \$400,000. The town has intimated that if the Comfort Station is not built by 2024, their \$50,000 will go toward the viaduct. The location that was decided on was Wadawanuck Square behind the library. Many letters were submitted from businesses and residents in support of the Comfort Station. If we do not receive state bonding money in July, we will speak with Dime Bank about a loan. The financing would be by Ordinance. There would be a public hearing of the Ordinance.

Charles Hartman mentioned the cost of cleaning and that the cost could be over a million dollars over the years.

Lisa Tepper Bates said that it is a matter of being a community who is open to our visitors. There has been a need for over 25 years. This has been discussed, opinions have been gathered and decisions on location were made.

Annette Binkowski, owner of Cove Ledge, mentioned 5 or 6 times a day customers ask to use their restrooms.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **AirSmith Development Cell Tower**

AirSmith had sent a request to place a cell tower in Wimpheimer Park. Warden Schefers responded that our zoning restrictions would not allow for a cell tower.

### **Off-Street Parking Application**

A proposed application has been developed and was included in the Agenda package. Burgess Rogers asked that the website and/or phone number at Borough Hall be added to the form.

### **Draft Vendor Ordinance**

Burgesses Bowdler and Nicholas drafted an Ordinance. Suggested changes included the number of vendors at the Point at the same time and the fees. The Ordinance will be re-drafted and presented at the July 2023 meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

#### **Consider appointing Sandra Murray member of P&Z**

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to appoint Sandra Murray as a member of Planning and Zoning, was unanimously approved.

#### **Consider Fire Department change — Training — Safety Officer**

The candidate has had prior experience as both a training and a safety officer. Chief Hoadley has requested we pay \$3,600 a year to the training and safety officer.

#### **Discuss new vehicle for Fire Chief**

The Chief's vehicle has continuously broken down and we have put much money into repairs. There were an additional \$1,500 in repairs that were suggested but not done this time. There will be money put into the truck fund which include the highway dept trucks and the Fire Chief truck.

#### **Consider request by SVIA to replace the bench on Union Street**

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to replace the bench on Union Street outside James Merrill House in honor of Sandra Bragdon, was unanimously approved.

#### **Consider requests to use Borough property**

##### **Consider request by Stonington Historical Society-Fourth of July Parade**

A motion by Warden Schefers, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to approve the request by Stonington Historical Society to use Main, Water, Broad, High Streets and Wadawanuck Square from 9:30 – 11:30 am for the Fourth of July Parade and reading, was unanimously approved.

##### **Consider request by Kelley's Pace for Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race**

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Warden Schefers, to approve the request by Jeff Walker of Kelley's Pace to use Wadawanuck Square, Main, Mathews, Water, Omega, Hancock and Diving Streets for the Battle of Stonington 5K Road Race on August 22, 2023 from 5:30 – 7:00 pm, was unanimously approved.

##### **Consider request to reappoint Joe Williams to Harbor Commission**

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Barnes, to reappoint Joe Williams to the Harbor Commission, was unanimously approved.

##### **Consider request to appointing PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP**

A motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, to appoint PKF O'Connor Davies, LLP as auditor of Borough Y/E June 30, 2023, was unanimously approved.

**Consider budget reconciliation adjustments**

A motion by Burgess Barnes, seconded by Burgess Nicholas, to approve FY 22-23 budget adjustment transfers, was unanimously approved.

**OTHER BUSINESS AND DISCUSSION**

Burgess Nicholas has noticed that there have been a few people, both residents and visitors, walking their dogs without a leash. Warden Schefers will put this in his letter to residents. He asked that all Burgesses add their thoughts about this to him.

**ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion by Burgess Nicholas, seconded by Burgess Rogers, adjournment of the meeting at 9:00 pm, was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lisa M. Coleman  
July 3, 2023